

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A conveyance apparatus, comprising:
a supporting device having a through hole passing in a gravity direction, to support glass material in a fluid or semi-fluid condition, ~~and~~
a supplying device to supply a fluid into the through hole; and
a shutter member which is located lower in the vertical direction than a position through which the fluid is supplied into the through hole, and is movable between a position for closing at least a portion of the through hole, and a position for opening the through hole, wherein after the shutter member is closed, when the glass material is dropped into the through hole from a top of the through hole, whereby the glass material is supported by the fluid in the through hole, under a non-physical contact condition, and when the glass material is not supported by change of the amount of supply of the fluid, the shutter member is open and the glass material drops from a lower end of the through hole to an outside.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Original) The conveyance apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:
a temperature control device for controlling the temperature of the fluid supplied to the through hole.

4. (Original) The conveyance apparatus of claim 3,
wherein the temperature control device has a heater and a thermal sensor which
are arranged in a supplying path of the fluid.

5. (Original) The conveyance apparatus of claim 1,
wherein the fluid is supplied into the through hole in such a way that the fluid
passes between the glass material and an interior wall of the through hole.

6-14. (Canceled)

15. (Original) The conveyance apparatus of claim 1,
wherein a tapered section which increases in diameter from its base to its top is
provided on a top section of the through hole.

16. (Original) The conveyance apparatus of claim 1,
wherein a porous material is arranged on a portion of an inner circumferential
surface of the through hole, and through which the fluid is supplied to the through hole.

17. (Original) The conveyance apparatus of claim 1,
wherein the porous material is graphite.

18-35. (Canceled)